

The Class of '57 Still Has Dreams:

A Program for the 60th Reunion · by Bruce Evans

[Chorus sings]

Seems like old times, having you to walk with
Seems like old times, having you to talk with
Making dreams come true, doing things we used to do
Seems like old times being here with you.



[Narrator]

Greetings, classmates. Tonight, back in the wonderful building from which we launched our adult lives, we celebrate old times, good times, and continue to look forward to the joys and challenges of new times. Let us begin with a stately, majestic version of our *alma mater*. Dorothy has requested that we make it a little more relaxed, a little less frenetic, than the way we did it 10 years ago at our 50th, so let's follow her lead.

[Entire class sings "Where the Blue Pacific Watches"]

No doubt one of the great high school memories many of us have is that of the Mary Jo Hanley Trio, featuring Mary Jo, Dorothy Tucker Railston, and Susie Olson Van Tyne, singing at the annual production called Vodvil. We'd like to honor them tonight. Here are Susie and Dorothy to say a few words about the Trio.

[Susie and Dorothy talk, then chorus sings "Blue Skies"]

Blue skies smilin' at me
Nothin' but blue skies do I see
Bluebirds singin' a song
Nothin' but bluebirds all day long.
Never saw the sun shinin' so bright
Never saw things goin' so right
Noticing the days hurrying by
When you're in love my, my how they fly.
Blue days, all of them gone
Nothin' but blue skies from now on
Never saw the sun shinin' so bright
Never saw things goin' so right
Noticing the days hurrying by
When you're in love my, my how they fly.
Blue days, all of them gone
Nothin' but blue skies from now on.



[Chorus takes seats in the front row.]

[Narrator]

Remember how in '57 we used to tool down Highway 99 in our customized cars listening to Bob Salter on KJR and cracking up over a 45 record made by Eddie Lawrence, the Old Philosopher? Remember how that record went? "You say you just lost your job today? You say your wife went out for a corned beef sandwich last weekend—and the sandwich came back but she didn't? Is that what's troubling you, Bunkie? Well, lift your head up high and take a walk in the sun with dignity and stick-to-it-iveness, and you'll show the world, you'll show them where to get off. You'll never give up, never give up that ship!"

Now, 60 years later, we've all become old philosophers, haven't we? Through the years we've taken our share of bumps and bruises, but we've rolled with the punches, haven't we? We're survivors, aren't we? And even today, in our digital age dotage, we're still meeting the world head on with our chins up, aren't we, old Tigers and Tigresses? I mean:

You say you're just all a-tingle to greet the dawning of each new day—because you have shingles on your back and neuropathy in your feet?

... and you know that laughter really is the best medicine but your bladder leakage makes the cure worse than the disease?

... and you told your wife at breakfast that you were going out to ask your doctor if you were a good candidate for Cialis for all day and she was still laughing when you saw her again at lunch?

... and every time you see your granddaughter, whom you love dearly, you want to hand her a tissue because the jewelry in her nose looks like snot?

... and the Mariners have never been in a World Series and you don't know how many seasons of fandom you have left and you just heard that they've decided to rebuild yet again—this time by trading Felix Hernandez and Robinson Cano for two hot-shot prospects currently in Little League plus a player to be conceived later?

... and you can't remember why you just left the living room and walked into the kitchen but you **can** still remember when the old hooty owl hooty-hoo'd to the dove?

... and all of your appliances are smarter than you are?

... and you're pretty sure that your microwave has been spying on you?

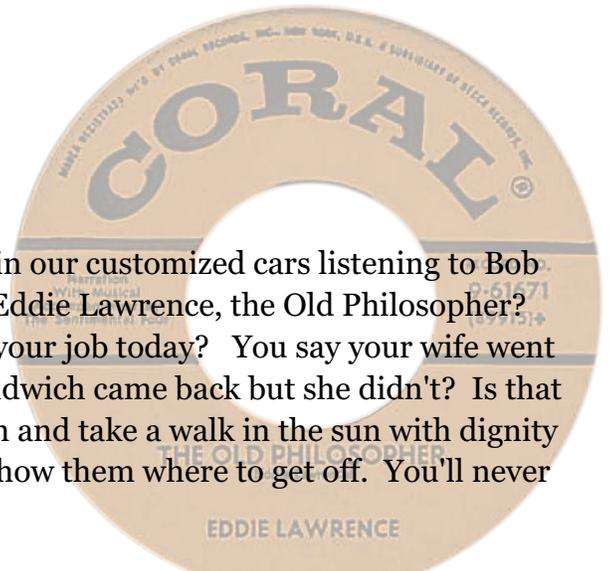
Is that what's troubling you, classmate?

[Chorus chimes in]

"Well, lift your head up high and take a walk in the sun with dignity and stick-to-it-iveness, and you'll show the world, you'll show them where to get off. You'll never give up, never give up that ship!"

[Narrator]

... and you say the effort to distinguish between truth and post-truth and news and fake news and facts and alternative facts is wearing you out?



... and you don't know when or why you would use a "hashtag" or where to find the Deep Web or what the heck a Bitcoin is?

... and at Chanterelle's you ordered quinoa because you heard it was healthy and wasn't one of those genetically-mortified foods and the waitress giggled and said "You mean "kee-NOO-ah?" — but no matter how it was pronounced it still tasted like cardboard?

... and you'd like to have a trigger warning every time a character drops an f-bomb in movie dialogue but you realize that would make the movie last about five hours?

... and you can't wait for self-driving cars to go on the market so you can avoid the embarrassment of trying to parallel park?

... and you finally bought a smart phone, only it was a Samsung Galaxy 7 and it caught fire in your pocket and gave you second-degree burns?

... and you put butter on those burns as Coach Rowe taught you to do in Health class and they began to sizzle even more?

... and when you went for treatment the ageist, patronizing medical assistants insisted on calling you "Sweetie" or "Hon" or "Young man" or "Young Lady" instead of "Sir" or "Ma'am"?

... and 60 years ago you couldn't wait to get out of high school and now you can't wait for the annual class reunions?

Is that what's troubling you, classmate?

[Chorus chimes in]

"Well, lift your head up high and take a walk in the sun with dignity and stick-to-it-iveness, and you'll show the world, you'll show them where to get off. You'll never give up, never give up that ship!"

[Narrator]

Perhaps you recall a song called "The Class of '57" recorded by the Statler Brothers in '72. ("And the Class of '57 had its dreams".) Sadly, the class depicted in that song saw its dreams go largely unfulfilled, whereas most of our class have found, I believe, that, although life can indeed be harsh at times, it is also shot through with joy and glory, and through the years most of us have managed to carve out a meaningful niche for ourselves. Sandwiched between what Tom Brokaw called the Greatest Generation, which dealt with a major depression and a World War, and the Baby Boomer Generation, which made so much noise challenging cultural norms in the '60s and '70s, we are members of what is known as the Silent Generation. But silence, paradoxically enough, is itself a kind of speech, and still waters do run deep. In keeping with the modesty of our generation, I

think we may modestly give ourselves credit for coping with and adapting to rapid and dramatic social and technological changes while at the same time maintaining many stabilizing traditions.

We provided some cultural glue—not an inflexible, unbreakable Gorilla Glue, not a rash, quick-binding Krazy Glue, but a kinder, gentler, more forgiving Elmer's Glue. We paid our own way, we contributed our labor toward the betterment of society—it wasn't our generation that invented reality TV—we raised families, we practiced good citizenship, and now here we are in our late 70s still seeking enjoyment and fulfillment from life. We still have our modest dreams, I believe, so let us conclude tonight by singing together "What a Wonderful World," a song of praise and joy, a song that I hope reflects the spirit of the EHS class of '57. Feel free to channel your inner Louis Armstrong.

[Entire class sings "What a Wonderful World"]

I see trees of green, red roses too
I see them bloom for me and you
And I think to myself what a wonderful world.
I see skies of blue and clouds of white
The bright blessed day, the dark sacred night
And I think to myself what a wonderful world.
The colors of the rainbow so pretty in the sky
Are also on the faces of people going by
I see friends shaking hands saying how do you do
But they're really saying I love you.
I hear babies cry, and I watched them grow
They'll learn much more than I'll ever know.
And I think to myself what a wonderful world
Yes, I think to myself what a wonderful world.

